

515 but in neither case did practice measure up to ideal, to judge from the
 356 abundance of body vermin and from descriptions of toldos. Body lice were commonly eaten.

POLITICAL LIFE

114 Our best source on political life is Viedma. Musters, D'Orbigny, and Borgatello rank next in order as sources.

There were no sibs, no secret or other societies, and no ruling caste or marked social stratification.

621 The band.—The basic *Tehuelche* economico-political unit was the band, each with its own headman. There was no peace-time paramount chief of all the *Tehuelche*, or of either of the two great divisions, northern and southern. According to Fitz-Roy (1839, 2:131), the *Tehuelche* of his time were divided into four groups or bands of about 400 adults each, each band under its own headman. D'Orbigny, however, who made his observations in 1829 just 4 years prior to Fitz-Roy's visit, states that the *Tehuelche* were divided into a great number of bands (1839, 2:97-98)—a statement that is in closer agreement with most of our earlier and more recent sources.

To judge from our scattered data, these bands were usually, though not always, small. In 1749 there came to Pilar mission three *Tehuelche* caciques with 80 toldos, each toldo sheltering 3 or 4 families, and the families averaging 5 persons each (Sánchez Labrador, 1936, p. 119)—thus, about 400-530 souls on the average per cacique. One band met by the Malaspina expedition in 1789 had 60 members in all (Lehmann-Nitsche, 1914, p. 8). Other estimates are: At most 30 to 40 families per band (D'Orbigny, 1935-47, 2:97); 5 to 30 families (Spegazzini, 1884, p. 229); never more than 20 toldos found in one camp (Borgatello, 1924, p. 20); and one large band, Mulato's, with over 500 persons (ibid., p. 134).

621 Some insight into the composition and functions of the band may
 423 be derived from Fitz-Roy, D'Orbigny, and later writers. Each of
 721 Fitz-Roy's four bands had its own cacique or headman, and each claimed "a separate though ill-defined territory" as its exclusive hunting ground; at times all four bands would foregather in one place; encroachment by members of one band on the hunting ground of another led to battles (Fitz-Roy, 1839, 2:131). Each toldería had its own territory, two or three of them on the banks of the Río Negro (D'Orbigny, 1835-47, 2:98). Bands were made up of related or friendly families (Spegazzini, 1884, pp. 228-229). Each small band was composed of relatives and friends; each claimed exclusive hunting rights on its own territory, trespass being cause for war, and the most frequent cause (Borgatello, 1924, pp. 19-20).

621 The foregoing citations speak for themselves. Attention may merely be called in passing to three points, particularly in the passages from Viedma—the fluidity of band membership, the kinship nucleus of the band, and the system of family hunting grounds very similar to that prevalent among the linguistically related *Chon*-speaking peoples, the *Oña*. (Cf. also on this third point, Krickeberg, 1934, pp. 331–332).

622 The headman's chief function in peacetime, in addition to the functions mentioned in the preceding paragraphs, was to harangue the band each morning and voice the day's agenda as regarded hunting and traveling. (For a text example of such a hunting exhortation, see Hunziker, 1928 a.) He had practically no authority to issue orders; nobody would have obeyed him. Nor did he act as authoritative judge in disputes. The average *Tehuelche's* attitude appears to have been that of Musters' Indian, Cuastro, who with his dying breath shouted out: "I die as I have lived—no cacique orders me" (Musters, 1871, pp. 80–81, 184). The headmanship was usually, but not always, hereditary, from father to son.

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578 Disputes.—There was no set judicial procedure. Conflicts between men of the band were commonly settled by fist fights, or else with the bolas, the disputants in the latter case being corseleted and helmeted; between women, by tongue lashings, hair pulling, and clubbing (Viedma, 1837 b, p. 81); Mufiz, 1917, pp. 212–213); often before an interested gathering of their fellow tribesmen and tribeswomen, who abstained from interfering and greatly enjoyed the spectacle, so Viedma (1837 b, p. 81) informs us.

721 Bloody feuds between bands, occasioned by trespass, horse or woman stealing, or other causes, were common. The *Tehuelche* were far from being pacifists, but rather the contrary. The various bands would sometimes unite, in loose temporary or more lasting confederations, against common enemies—the Argentine *Araucanians*, the *Puelche*, or the Whites. The leaders had considerable influence, depending, it would seem, a great deal upon their abilities and personalities.

WARFARE

411 The chief fighting weapons of the later *Tehuelche* (on the warlike pursuits, and for that matter on the whole political culture of the early *Tehuelche*, we have practically no information) were the long lance and the bolas, especially the bola perdida, to which were added, when obtainable, metal swords and knives of Spanish provenance, and guns and pistols. D'Orbigny (1835–47, 2:117) mentions a "dard" [javelin? for hunting?], and Sánchez Labrador (1936, p. 45) states that when an enemy could not be reached with the lance as held it was sometimes thrown at him. Heavy coats of multiple hide and

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870) 1873

SH5 Tehuelche SH5
Araucanians SG4

LAS MANZANAS.

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etiquette; then retired to keep Hinchel, who would not⁵⁷⁴ drink, company by his fireside. Whilst chatting together he^{TA} related how, many years ago, this place had been the scene⁷²¹ of a great battle between the Tehuelches and Manzaneros, in which he, though only a boy, was struck down by a bola perdida and wounded with a lance whilst on the ground; the battle resulting in a victory to the Tehuelches.

The day following the drink, meat being scarce, I dined⁰⁰⁰ in Foyel's toldo off a little cornmeal and a dessert of apples and piñones, of which the honours were done by his daughter, a pretty girl of eighteen, with long black silky hair, which it was the special duty of her handmaid—a captive Tehuelche girl—to dress daily. This young lady never condescended to any menial labour, though she occasionally busied her delicate fingers with the needle; her dowry of about eighty mares and the influence of her father made her of course a most desirable match; but she, up to the time of my departure, had exercised the privilege of an heiress and refused all offers. This evening she was in great trouble,^T having lost a new mantle and some other valuables, stolen^[673] no doubt by the Tehuelches. I promised to set inquiries on foot through Casimiro, which resulted in the stolen property being given up, and the thief proved to be the same individual who had endeavoured to rob our toldo.

Shortly after this two messengers were despatched to^A Cheoeque, who returned on March 25 with intelligence⁶⁴⁸ that the said chief would be ready to receive us on April 2, and 'that we were to bring our arms,' which latter message was rather ambiguous. I had been given the option of taking our chief's message to Cheoeque, but owing to one of my horses being lame, and for other reasons, preferred going with the mass later on. Meña, the Chilian, was therefore honoured with the despatches in my place, as he alone was competent to read the Spanish letters written by myself as secretary, and he returned with glowing accounts of the civility shown him at Las Manzananas, and the generally civilised appearance of those Indians.

A 648 pine groves, gathering the autumn harvest; but I subsequently met some of these Indians at the Guardia waiting for Rouque's ration, and recognised one as having been present at our council and subsequent festivities in La Manzanas. The Government agent for Indian affairs, Bonifaccio, showed me a magnificent pair of stirrups sent from Buenos Ayres as a present to Rouque, the policy of the authorities being to keep him and Cheoeque from joining Calficura in the threatened raid on the frontier. The reason assigned for the declaration of war by this latter chief was the death—by which he probably meant the imprisonment—of one of his inferior caciques; but the real reason probably was that the Argentine Government, on account of robberies committed by some of his people, had refused to renew his ration of animals. The outbreak in Entre Rios, resulting from the death of Urquiza, was then unforeseen, and it was intended to have despatched a large force, under the command of Señor Mitre, to reinforce the whole frontier, and if necessary crush Calficura; but the troubles caused by Lopez Jordan necessitated the despatch of all available forces at once to Entre Rios, and the meditated scheme of rendering the frontier secure was postponed. Calficura subsequently took advantage of this by attacking the frontier in various places, carrying off captives women and children, besides numerous herds of cattle, winding up by attacking and devastating the new settlements in the neighbourhood of Bahia Blanca, his Indians penetrating boldly, almost without resistance, into the very heart of the town, and returning with abundance of booty. Patagones was not attacked, which may partially be due to the arrangements effected in Las Manzanas, the unwillingness of the Tehuelches to join, and the gaining over of Rouque. The latter chief, however, most probably played a double game, and whilst receiving rations and gifts with one hand, allowed his people to join the raids and received plunder with the other.

721 One reason for the Indians not committing great raids on

THE RIO NEGRO SETTLEMENTS.

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the Rio Negro settlements is simply that cattle and horses hardly exist in sufficient numbers to reward a foray on a large scale. Small parties sometimes come in, as in the case described, when the horses were taken from the 'China Muerte,' the estancia of Mr. Fraser's neighbour; but these are rather robberies than hostile invasions—indeed, no important raids have occurred since the time of Lenquetrou, who united all the Indians for the purpose, and swept the valley in a raid which, it may be remembered, was described to me by Gravino, a participator in it, at Inacayal's toldos, near the Pass of the Rio Limay. The settlers were naturally anxious to know my opinion as to the probable safety of the Rio Negro, and I assured them that, from what I knew, there was little chance of a raid, but that, on the contrary, Bahia Blanca was sure to be attacked, and I especially warned one of our countrymen who was on his way to Bahia Blanca not to hazard himself by settling outside the town at the present juncture. Englishmen are apt to suppose that because they possess good weapons, rifles and revolvers, and are able and ready to use them, they can resist an Indian attack; but the whole system of their warfare consists in sudden surprises. They secretly collect their forces, and waiting at a safe distance during the night, come in at the early dawn; and perhaps the unsuspecting settler, going to the corral or looking for his horses, observes in the distance what appears to be a troop of horses, driven, according to custom, by one or two mounted men; these approach unchallenged, but in a second every horse displays an armed rider, shouting his war-cry. They then spread out, as if to encircle the game, thus presenting no front to the rifles of their opponents, and dash down lance in hand; and whilst some secure the animals, others set fire to the dwellings and carry off the women—if there are any—captives. In some cases they kill the men, but generally only when much resistance is offered.

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Although their chief object in warfare is to carry off cattle

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none of *his* Indians ate fish. This, and some similar incidents and conversations, convinced me that there were other Indian tribes in the vicinity. On one occasion I had noticed some places where a tribe, probably as numerous as our own, had encamped. Their fires appeared to have been very recently extinguished. Our tribe appeared to be considerably disturbed at these discoveries, and I judged that they were the traces of some enemies. It is certain that my captors had seen some desperate fights, of which they bore the marks on their persons. One of them had a deep scar on his breast, which he said was the mark of an arrow-shot received from the "Yamaschoner" Indians, a tribe that use the bow and arrow. His description suggested the probability that these were the Terra-del-Fuego Indians; but, on mentioning the conjecture at a later period to a person I met at the Chilian penal settlement, he informed me that those islanders invariably shoot *poisoned* arrows, which would not leave the victim much leisure to describe their effect. The scar in question was a deep one, in the region of the heart; and while I was examining it, the chief remarked that the arrow passed through his body and came out at his back. On examination, a distinct scar was visible on his back, so far corresponding in form and direction with the one in front, that it seemed likely to have been made by the same weapon. But how the arrow could have transfixed him through the chest, without wounding the vital organs, was not easily to be conjectured. The only explanation I could conceive of was, that the fellow's heart was so much harder than any material used for arrow-heads, that the missile, instead of penetrating that important organ, had glanced aside and passed without mortal hurt.

Enough had been developed to assure me that the tribe generally had hearts of no ordinary toughness, capable of serving them for all practical purposes wherein impenetrable stuff was in request; but the tale of this miraculous escape gave a new impression of obduracy, and entitled the hero to bear the palm among his fellows. I pretended to pity him for his former sufferings, and went so far as to volunteer — in case I should ever be permitted to enter the enemy's territory — to make mince-meat of some of them, and so to avenge his cruel injuries. This spontaneous sympathy and forwardness to take up his quarrel was exceedingly gratifying to the sufferer and to the chief, and drew from them a more particular narrative of the combat. 721 ●

They were out on a horse-stealing expedition, — the usual occasion, it seems, of Patagonian fights, — and made a swoop upon the camp of another tribe. The objects of this felonious invasion asserted title to the horses in their possession by certain tangible arguments, and induced a mortal combat. And now Old Boy waxed eloquent, and especially displayed that prime ingredient, "action." His broad-sword exercise was really animated, and taught us "how fields were won," — or would have done so, but that, while his right hand was slashing the air with his good steel, his left *would* hold the bridle-rein, and his heels involuntarily drive the spur; — in short, though it was a part on which he did not linger in the narration any more than in the act, there was some tall running on the occasion. So artlessly was the tale told, that while the hero was cutting and thrusting and grunting, to make due impression of the desperate bravery displayed in the encounter, his subordinate action clearly depicted a running and 726 ●

484 as before, but if he says nothing, then all know that for the while they are to remain in that place. Their camp site is usually in the area to which they know that the game has moved. When the chief sees that meat is running low he gives orders at sundown, in the same manner as when ordering a move to a new camp site, that the horses are to be brought in at some specified time on the following day. Once this has been done he harangues them once more, this time on horseback, and assigns the hunting stations and all else which each group of hunters is to do. Some women go with them to load the game, the men being unwilling to do even this chore. The tents are left standing and in them the remaining women, children, and disabled Indians wait. At sundown they return to their tents once more. The chief's authority is limited to these few activities only, and he never for any crime punishes his people, although in the aforementioned matters in which obedience is required it is never found that they do not fulfill his orders faithfully. When he wants to wage war on his neighbors, or on some other group which may have insulted their honor, this can only be carried into effect with the approval of his chief subordinates, to which effect they meet together in the chief's tent. The latter mulls over and explains the wrongs which have been done, the way in which they can be avenged, forces, ease and difficulties entailed in the waging of the war. The members of the council confer about the matter and either approve or reject the proposal of the chief, who does not take offense if he is overruled. Usually the chief's bid for war is approved and the council merely discusses ways and means of waging it, and the time of its commencing. This discussion often lasts some days. Once they are agreed on the matter of beginning hostilities the chief, on three successive nights, shouts the news in a loud voice from his tent so as to inform his people of the declaration of war, the time which has been set for its [72] commencement, the manner in which it is to be conducted, who are the enemies, the cause of the war, and they are warned to be wary and prepared.

One of the principle causes for the declaration of war is the following: Each chief's territory has fixed boundaries, and no Indian may cross into the territory of a neighbor without obtaining permission from the latter to do so. The Indian who wishes to obtain such permission must make three smoke signals, and until he is answered by three other smoke signals he may not approach the encampment. Once he has been answered he must give an account of himself to the chief in whose territory he is, telling his reasons for coming, be it only because he is passing through or because he wishes to take up residence there. If the chief so

desires he gives his permission, and if not, he orders him to leave his territory and dominions immediately. If the Indian is going as ambassador for his own chief or for some other group of Indians, either to ask permission to pass through the territory or to trade or to pay a call, he is told by the chief the time, the place of entry, the road to be followed in order to continue on their way or the land they are to occupy in order to do their trading. After all of this, the three smoke signals must be made again and once these are answered by the Indians whose territory they wish to enter, they all come; at about one league from the encampment the men come to a halt, the women go forward with the children, put up their tents in the spot which has been assigned to them and, all being in readiness, the men go forward and join the women. No one comes out to receive the newcomers, each group being in sight of the others for quite a long period until the chief or some other of the visitors goes to pay his respects to the host chief, who receives him in his tent in company of his principal lieutenants all of whom gather to welcome the stranger. This call often lasts a whole day since, as each speaks without being interrupted by anyone else, if the visitor brings much news and wishes also to learn all about the things of note in the territory, the speech of each individual present is liable to last two or three hours and even more as they also repeat certain words and phrases many times over. He who is listening, together with all who surround him, pays strict attention to what is said, saying with some frequency "a," "a," which means yes, yes, and with no other word do they interrupt the speaker. At these meetings alliances are made, general feelings of friendliness are exchanged and other contracts, pacts and agreements are concluded, in all of which the chiefs have absolute authority. When the formalities here described are not observed prior to entering the territory or camp of some other group, then the action is considered a sign of bad faith and a general alarm is sounded.

They also declare war on each other often for horse stealing, and as a result the vanquished are deprived of their horses, the young women and children are made captives and the old women together with the able-bodied men are given no quarter, unless they save themselves by escaping from their pursuers. [73]

The chief is under the obligation of protecting and aiding the Indians in his territory when they are in need, and so that chief is most popular and esteemed by his people who best is able to succor them, is most openhanded, and intelligent in the hunt. He who is lacking in these qualities is deserted by his followers in favor of one who possesses them, and is thus left only with his relatives and open to continual

622 invasion by his neighbors. As a matter of fact the unfortunate chief's
 582 family does not lose its right to its land, and with the passage of time it
 often happens that some descendant will re-establish the colony which his
 father, grandfather or brother destroyed either by bad luck or bad conduct.
 When a chief becomes old and unable to fulfill the obligations of his posi-
 tion he hands over his authority to a successor.

583 Marriages are made by a man's buying his wife from her father
 584 or from some other under whose guardianship she may be, and in propor-
 tion to her rank, good looks, conduct, etc. she is either more or less ex-
 pensive. Her will is not taken into account for this transaction by her
 585 father or guardian, and she cannot set herself against her own sale. Each
 586 man may have one, two, or more wives of his own, depending on his
 587 wealth, but only rarely does a man have more than one unless he be a
 chief or an Indian of great power. Three is the greatest number of wives
 which any man gets to possess, and each husband has the right of selling
 his wives to another, but this resale makes the woman of little worth, and
 for that reason she is sold very cheaply; poor men only buy women in this
 way since they lack the funds to buy them first-hand. It is not considered
 improper to sell a woman to a relative, unless it be to the woman's son or
 brother, all other relatives being eligible as buyers. Many are the mar-
 riages of this type which are consummated because of the expense involved
 836 in procuring an unmarried woman. Single women, while they are yet
 young and have hopes of being married keep their virginity, but should
 837 these hopes vanish, they will have sex relations promiscuously. Those
 married women who find that the husband who bought them from their
 father or guardian is to their liking, are faithful, but should they not like
 their husbands they become troublesome -- yet adultery is not considered
 674 crime unless committed in the husband's presence, and in such a case
 the adulterer and not the woman is blamed, and even then no punishment
 is meted out, the husband being easily mollified. The chief always has as
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 838 a wife the daughter or sister of some other chief, and she is the head wife
 amongst his others, who must serve her in every way. Even if the chief
 should tire of his principal wife he may not sell her because it would be
 721 considered an insult and cause for an outbreak of war with her relatives.
 839 All these head wives are grave in demeanor, given to few words, live
 secluded in their tents, spend their time in pursuits suitable [74] to their
 position, and do not take part in the vain conversations of the other Indian
 593 women. The men never manhandle the women for any reason, except when
 595 drunk, and even in such a condition the chief will never strike his head wife,
 although all the others may well receive their share of blows.